

KERNELS OF LEARNING

Family Education Newsletter– Generation 4 & 5 Edition

October 2024

The Architects Behind the Babson Style

WORLD'S FAIR CHICAGO, 1893



*Sullivan's colorful
Transportation Building*

From the moment of his arrival in Chicago, in 1893 for the Chicago World's Fair, Henry Babson was in the midst of an architectural battle. In a sea of white exhibition buildings at the fair (hence Chicago's nickname the White City), one building stood out from the rest and seventeen year old Henry took notice. The Transportation Building designed by architect Louis Sullivan, seemed to glow with it's palette of 44 different colors. His progressive design was ridiculed by many who made their pavilions and exhibit halls look like an outpost of the ancient world.

Sullivan, along with other courageous architects, continued this new architecture which was eventually labeled "the Prairie School" after the geographical area where most of the finest examples were built.



Chicago nicknamed The White City

Babson Estate - Riverside, Illinois



Over a decade after the World's Fair, Henry had become a very successful businessman, and was in need of an architect for his 23-acre country residence in Riverside, IL. He engaged Louis Sullivan in 1907, however his practice was waning due to his drinking problem. Fortunately, Sullivan's office had a gifted draftsman named George Elmslie who Henry ended up commissioning for 10 significant projects after he left Sullivan's employ and partnered with William Purcell (Purcell & Elmslie). The main home pictured on the left was done in 1907 and a stable was built in 1910. In 1912, Henry consulted with Elmslie on a number of interior projects, one of which included enclosing the sleeping porch off the master bedroom to provide a sitting area. The architects didn't like this idea but followed Henry's wishes and installed the tall wide decorative leaded glass windows which were iconic of the homes design. In the photos below you can see the enclosed sleeping porch, as well as the leaded glass windows and decorative ornaments salvaged from the home during the unfortunate demolition in 1960.

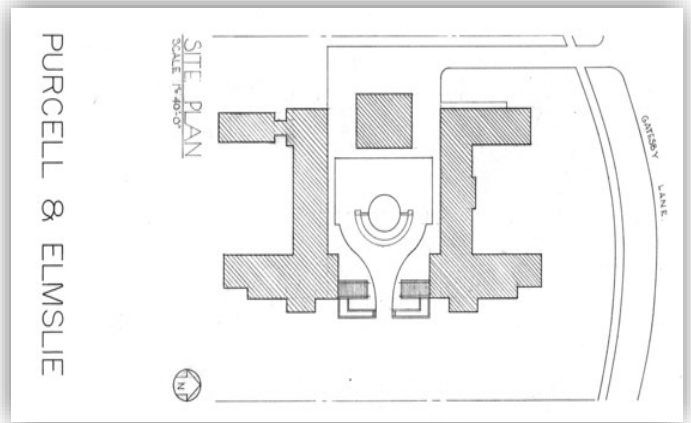


BABSON SERVICE BUILDINGS

283 GATESBY LANE

RIVERSIDE, ILLINOIS

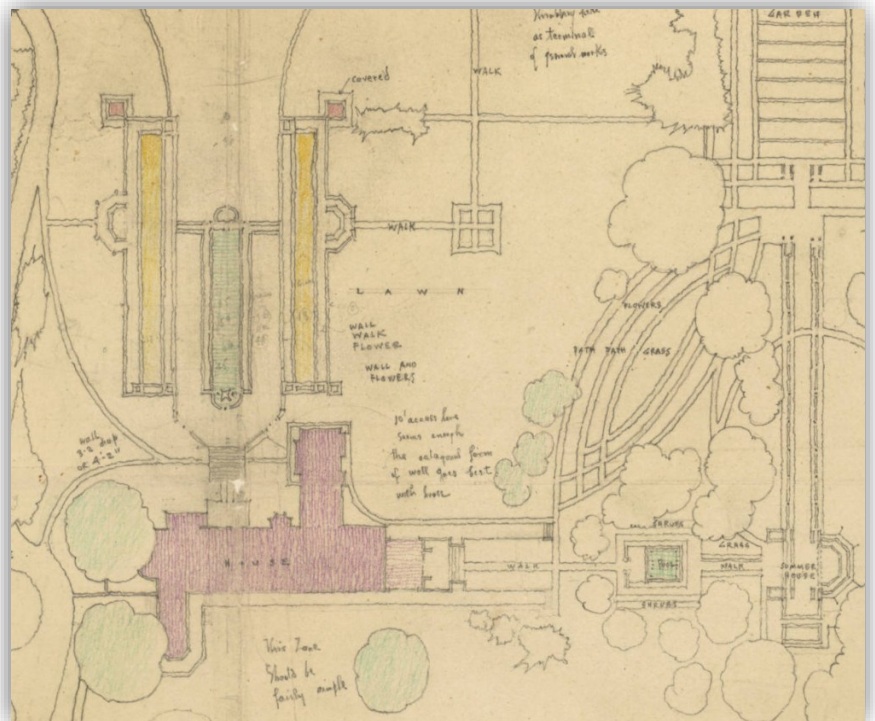
By 1915, transportation used by Henry had changed (an early adopter of the automobile) as well as the need to have a “working plant” to support the maintenance and upkeep of his house and grounds. A U-shaped complex of three service buildings was designed by Purcell and Elmslie which included a garage, stable, greenhouse, repair shop, store rooms, and staff living quarters. The low, red-brown brick buildings were placed at a distance northwest from the main house. The entire complex was sheltered by broadly over-hanging gable roofs, while terraces and gardens extended from the wings into a central court, and out to the surrounding prairie landscape.



Babson Estate Landscaping



Around the same time, Henry turned his attention to the landscaping of the estate. Elmslie had prepared elaborate drawings (pictured below— [click here](#) to zoom in and explore the plan) showing a series of interconnected paths, arbors, and recreation areas which continued the geometric shapes and designs unique to all his work (such as the ornamentation and lead glass windows throughout the properties). Babson rejected Elmslie’s plans as too costly and difficult to maintain. Instead, he hired landscape architect Jens Jensen who carried out his plans. The completion of the service buildings in 1916 brought the conclusion of P&E’s work at the estate.

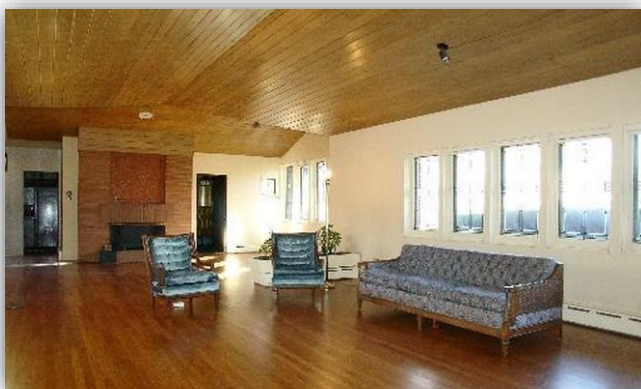


Babson Estate Service Buildings - Through the Years

Although the main house on the Babson property has been gone since 1960, the estate's service buildings remain and have been converted to private residences. The property's address was originally 283 Gatesby Lane but is now divided up into 281, 277, and 275 Gatesby Road. The north building (281) last sold in 2003 and the south building (277) sold in 2012. It appears that the center building, which was the Babson service garage, was sold with the south residence. The photos below are a mix of all three buildings varying in dates from the early 1900's to current. **Interesting Find**— the current resident in the home at 277 Gatesby Road is an avid gardener and has a Facebook page with lots of pictures. They have called it the Babson Estate 2.0. Many of the remodeled kitchen pictures show the beautiful lead glass windows that still remain. Be sure to check out the Facebook page [KDayCo Gardens at the Babson Estate 2.0](#) [Click Here](#).



Babson Estate Service Buildings - Through the Years



Check It Out

- ◆ KDayCo Gardens at the Babson Estate 2.0 Facebook Page [Click Here](#)
- ◆ Babson Riverside Estate [Click Here](#)
- ◆ Babson Service Buildings [Click Here](#)
- ◆ Library of Congress Riverside Pictures [Click Here](#)



Agronomy 101

Corny American Love Story

In 2023, America produced 500 million metric tons of corn, a figure so astoundingly large, it compares to the weight of 7,000 Great Pyramids of Gaza. And all of that corn was grown on 92 million acres of land—an area bigger than Malaysia.

But America's colossal corn-producing prowess didn't always exist, as seen in the yield data to the right. In fact, for the first half of the 20th century, yields remained range-bound between 20–30 bushels per acre.

Then, there were two miracles. First, the introduction of a drought-resistant variety of the crop (1940s). Then, the introduction of fertilizer, pesticides, and mechanized agriculture (1950s).

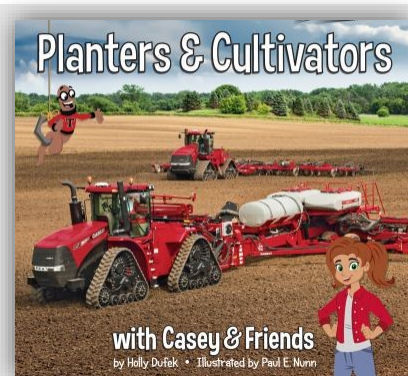
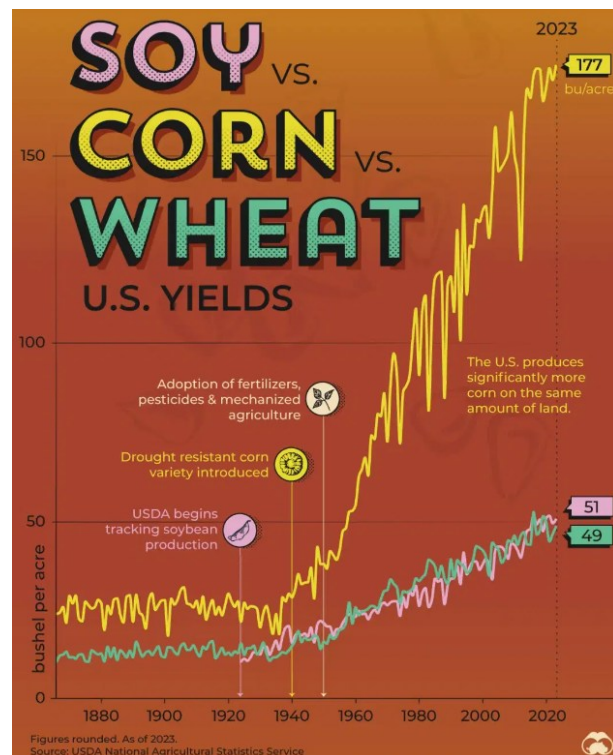
Since then, corn yields have climbed at a rate of roughly 1.9 bushel/acre, per year.

Ag Literacy

Babson Farms, along with other local sponsors, have provided funds for ag-related children's books to be distributed to DeKalb County school libraries. As of 2023, a total of 4,140 books (129 ag-related titles) have been donated. One series of donated books are The "Casey & Friends" book collection which provide a fun way to teach children about modern agriculture. Like all other areas



of life, farming has become very technologically advanced. The tools and machinery used today provide data that has improved farming techniques. From helping farmers decide what to plant, when to plant, where to plant, and if they should plant, to ways they can reduce waste, lower costs, improve soil health and so on. Technology has been a game changer for the farming industry.



Our very own Eric Shearer was pictured in the DeKalb County Farm Bureau's newsletter, representing Babson Farms as one of the programs sponsors.



Family Spotlight

The Atlanta Kirkpatrick's had a wonderful time at the Olympics in Paris. In August Sarah and Mary Jane competed at the Saddlebred World Championship Horse Show in Louisville and collectively brought home six ribbons (three 1st Place, two 2nd Place, one 3rd Place). Dave and MJ were in Telluride for the World Premiere of Dave's new movie project "Carville". Lot's of trips to Austin to see ME at the University of Texas. Sarah is a sophomore at Holy Innocents and cheering for football this fall.



The Denver Kirkpatrick's have an upcoming trip to Cuba planned for Thanksgiving. Henry is deep into the Denver chess scene and has straight A's in school! He is enthusiastic about his harmonica lessons and lifting weights. He and Taylor just took a father-son fishing trip to Wyoming.



The Steamboat Kirkpatrick's are staying busy with all their ventures including Antlers Café & Bar which was featured in Westword's Summer Guide. Tim and Cho enjoyed quality time with Sandy and Jeanie during their recent visit.

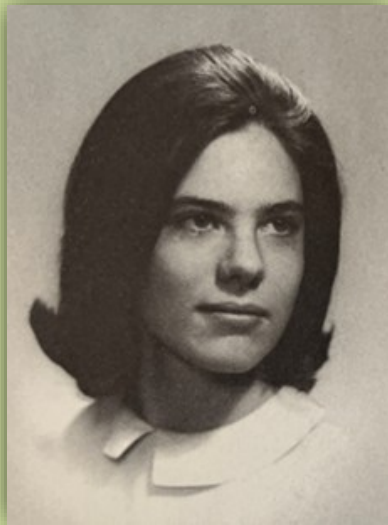


Wheelocks - In August, JT competed with Hooded at Lexington Horse Park in the USEA American Eventing Championships. This competition is described as the pinnacle of the sport for the national levels and draws hundreds of horses and riders from around the country. JT placed 29th in his division. Dave had a nice visit with Zeff and Andronica during a trip to Boston.



History Minute

Elizabeth Chapman Tieken



ELIZABETH CHAPMAN
TIEKEN
1500 Lake Shore Drive
Chicago 10, Illinois
"Libby" "Tieken"

"I am glad that I paid so little attention to good advice; had I abided by it I might have been saved from some of my most valuable mistakes."

Baronets . . . fissing around . . . "fearful" . . . FWH . . . "It's about that—!" . . . trouble with those I.A.'s . . . sandy beaches . . . baskets on May Day . . . cider.

What wise words. Often times we learn best by making our own mistakes!



- Zeff's Birthday November 24th
- Taylor's Birthday November 26th
- Chuck's Birthday January 9th
- JT's Birthday February 9th
- Tim & Cho Anniversary April 3rd
- Dave & MJ Anniversary April 25th
- Mary Jane's Birthday May 5th
- Sarah's 17th Birthday May 14th
- Mary Elizabeth's 20th Birthday May 19th